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ABSTRACT

Images of people can serve several purposes in works of art. Individuals have had their likenesses embellished or altered for political, social, or religious purposes. Or, images of individuals have been employed by other people to fit their needs. This Learning Packet, designed for use with grade levels 1-8, addresses three themes: (1)"People as Symbols"; (2) "People as Character Portrayals"; and (3) "Real People." A section of this packet is devoted to each of these themes. Two works of art slides (not included here) will be compared and contrasted for each section. Suggested activities for each thematic section and a list of resources for further study are given. Next to each activity, relevant subject areas are indicated, including visual arts, drama, language arts, social studies, English, and mathematics. (MM)

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A Look at Ourselves Learning Packet

HIGH museum of art

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A Look at Ourselves
Learning Packet

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Please note: Colors of the artworks reproduced in slides and color copies are slightly different due to the processing of the image. We encourage you to visit the High Museum of Art with your students to experience and enjoy the true colors of these objects. Therefore, we have chosen works of art which should be consistently on view in the permanent collection galleries, but at times objects may be removed for conservation purposes or as loans to other museums.

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A Look at Ourselves

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A Look at Ourselves
Introduction

A Look at Ourselves learning packet focuses on the different types of people students will meet at the High Museum of Art, and investigates how people have been represented in art throughout history and in various cultures.

Images of people can serve several purposes in works of art. At the Museum, students will learn that people are not always depicted just as they are. Individuals have had their likenesses embellished or altered for political, social, or religious purposes. Or, images of individuals have been employed by other people to fit their needs. When we see a person or group of people in a work of art, we can ask ourselves: Who are they? Where are they? What is happening? Why did an artist chose to depict them? These are some of the questions the Learning Packet will address as we investigate three themes:

- People as symbols
- People as character portrayals
- Real people

A section of the Learning Packet is devoted to each of these themes. Two works of art will be compared and contrasted for each section. The six color slides accompany the discussion of the objects. Within the text of the Learning Packet, you will find a color reproduction of one of the slides for each theme. You also find that the words in bold are defined in the glossary at the end of the packet. The Learning Packet also contains suggested activities for each thematic section and a list of resources for further study.

In general, the material has been composed for grade levels 1-8, to correspond with the tour, "A Look at Ourselves," offered at the High Museum of Art. However, several of the activities can be adapted to fit your students needs. Next to each activity listed, we have indicated the relevant subject area including, **visual arts, drama, language arts, social studies, English, and math.** General learning skills such as critical thinking, listening, oral presentation, writing, and observation are exercised through all of the activities. Please note that activities listed for the museum visit are recommended for teacher-guided groups only. For groups taking a docent-led tour, the museum guide will lead the activities during your visit.

The overall goal of this and all High Museum of Art learning packets is to help you expand and enhance lessons taught through use of the visual arts. A more

specific goal for *A Look at Ourselves* learning packet is for students to understand how representations of the human form not only give insight into the people depicted, but the times and the culture in which they lived. In learning about people through their representations, students will reflect on their own lives and what they stand for, what roles they play, and their relationships with other people.

This packet was written and compiled with the help of High Museum Department of Education Staff, in particular Eleanor McDonald Storza chair of Education Karen Luik, head of student and teacher programs Ann Kelso, coordinator of academic services, Pam Krisulewicz, and associate head of adult programs Mary Manley. Thanks also go to members of the High Museum of Art's Teacher Advisory Panel who reviewed this learning packet, especially Jackie Adkins of Marietta High School and Jackie Ellet of Fort Daniel Elementary.

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A Look at Oursleves

Slide List

SLIDE 1 *Helmet Mask (Sowei)*
Sande Society, Mende, Sierra Leone
Wood, 15 inches
Fred and Rita Richman Collection, 72.40.22

SLIDE 2 *Century Vase*, 1876
Designed by Karl Muller, Union Porcelain Works (1862-1912)
Porcelain, glazed and bisque with gilt decoration, 22 1/2 x 12 x 12 inches
Virginia Carroll Crawford Collection, 1986.163

SLIDE 3 Giovanni Maria Benzoni (Rome, 1809-1873)
The Veiled Rebekah, 1864
Marble, 64 x 23 x 19 1/2 inches
Gift of Mrs. John B. Gordon, 1927.23

SLIDE 4 Faith Ringgold (American, born 1930)
Church Picnic Story Quilt, 1988
Tie-dyed, printed fabrics, acrylic on canvas, 74 1/2 x 75 1/2 inches
Gift of Don and Jill Childress through the 20th Century Art Acquisition Fund, 1988.28

SLIDE 5 Henry Inman (American, 1801-1846)
Yoholo-Micco, 1832-33
Oil on canvas, 30 3/8 x 25 7/16 inches
Anonymous Gift, 1984.176

SLIDE 6 Ralph Earl (American, 1751-1801
Portrait of David Baldwin, 1790
Oil on canvas, 56 3/4 x 61 7/8
Purchase in honor of Lawrence L. Gellerstedt, Jr., President of the Board of Directors, 1984-86, with funds from Alfred Austell Thornton in memory of Leila Austell Thornton and Albert Edward Thornton, Sr., and Sarah Miller Venable and William Hoyt Venable, 1985.221

A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

I. People as Symbols

Helmet Mask (Sowei) Sande Society, Mende, Sierra Leone (figure 1)

A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

I. People as Symbols

SLIDE 1 *Helmet Mask (Sowei)*
Sande Society, Mende, Sierra Leone
Wood, 15 inches
Fred and Rita Richman Collection, 72.40.22

THE WORK OF ART

This helmet mask (figure and slide 1) represents what members of the all-female Sande society consider as the perfect feminine form. If you were asked who might be a perfect or **ideal** beauty, would you think of a famous model or actress, or your mother, or grandmother? For the African ethnic group called the Mende, this *Helmet Mask* served as a model of beauty–beauty found in the shiny black surfaces, elaborate **coiffure**, and decorative linear patterning.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

The mask also had an important purpose within the female Sande society which was responsible for the socialization of young girls. **Elders** in the society would take the young girls to special houses near their village to teach them how to be good mothers, wives, and productive members of their community. When the girls returned from seclusion they would be welcomed into the society by a dance with the powerful members wearing these *Helmet Mask* to represent protective spirits.

INTERPRETATION

In this way, the *Helmet Mask* was more than a representation of the female form. It had its own life as a **guardian** spirit and one that could only enter the mask if it was well carved and attractive. The Sande Society *Helmet Mask* has a two-fold purpose. It not only serves to protect young women, but also to teach them appropriate feminine behavior.

A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

SLIDE 2 *Century Vase, 1876*
Designed by Karl Muller, Union Porcelain Works (1862-1912)
Porcelain, glazed and bisque with gilt decoration, 22 1/2 x 12 x 12 inches
Virginia Carroll Crawford Collection, 1986.163

THE WORK OF ART

Compare the human form of the Sande Society helmet mask to the figure on the *Century Vase*, (slide 2) which is decorated with a **silhouette** portrait of George Washington. Although from a different culture, this vase is similar to the Sande mask because it also represents the human figure as more than a visual likeness of a person. These works of art are **symbols** which stand for ideas that relate to the larger community. The portrait of George Washington on the *Century Vase* **commemorates** his glorious role as the founding father of the United States.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

The vase, made for the 1876 Great Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, also celebrates contemporary achievements--the new advancements in nineteenth-century technologies such as the steamboat and telegraph. Images of these technologies at work decorate the vase alongside the silhouette portrait of George Washington and scenes from American history. By putting all of these images together, the creators of the vase were effectively linking the past to the present and implying that they were similarly glorious. Even the choice of a functional object such as a vase further highlights the progress of production and manufacturing occurring during the Industrial Age.

INTERPRETATION

Just as the Sande Society *Helmet Mask* upholds standards of feminine beauty, the images on the *Century Vase* promote the value of **innovation** which began in the earliest days of American independence. Both of these objects spoke to a number of people; members of the Sande Society knew that the mask did not represent a particular person, but personal qualities they should try to achieve. George Washington, on the other hand, *was* a particular person. However, because he was famous and recognized by many people, Washington stood for something beyond himself. He was, and still is, a heroic symbol.

A Look at Ourselves
Suggested Activities

I. People as Symbols

PRE-VISIT

1) Ask students to collect items from their daily life that use people as symbols, such as a penny with an image of Lincoln, a bottle of cleaner with "Mr. Clean" on the label, or an advertisement featuring a famous spokesmodel. In a show-and-tell fashion have students present their objects and explain what they symbolize. **Language Arts, Social Studies**

2) In groups, students may research a human figure used as a symbol that has changed over time. For example, visit a library and go through old magazines to discover how the model of the housewife has changed. Have students create a time-line illustrated with the different versions of the symbol. Also ask them look to up other major historical events to add to the time-line. **Language Arts, Social Studies**

3) Discuss the different techniques that artists used to create the Mende *Helmet Mask* and the *Century Vase*. Look for differences in color, lines, materials, and form. Discuss how the carvings on the *Helmet Mask* were executed as compared to the silhouette portrait of George Washington on the *Century Vase*. **Visual Arts**

MUSEUM VISIT FOR TEACHER-GUIDED GROUPS

1) View the *Mende mask* and then the *Century Vase* and ask your students to think about what similarities there might be between the two objects. Have students share their lists of similarities and decide, or vote, on which ones could be considered characteristics for identifying people as symbols. Can they find other objects that fit these characteristics? **Social Studies, Visual Arts**

2) Other works of art that represent people as symbols are the paintings *Temperance* and *Prudence* by Vittore Carpaccio in the European Collection galleries. View the work while at the Museum and discuss what temperance and prudence mean. How are these symbols different than ones that represent beauty and heroism? **Language Arts**

A Look at Ourselves
Suggested Activities

3) Have students list ideals they feel are important to them, for example, beauty, strength, heroism, patience, kindness, etc. Ask the students to choose an art work of a person which represents their ideal. Have the students write down the label information for their chosen work of art, to be researched back at school.

POST-VISIT

1) Create silhouette portraits of the students similar to George Washington's on the *Century Vase*. Mount a large piece of drawing paper onto the wall. Seat the student approximately three feet from the paper and shine a light behind the student to create a shadow on the paper. Students can find a partner and take turns tracing their profiles from the shadow projected onto the paper. Then, ask the students to refer to their list of ideals compiled at the Museum. Have them either draw or collect images which represent these ideals. These images can be pasted inside the boundaries of their silhouette, creating a representation of the student and his or her most important ideals. **Visual Arts**

2) Have students research the work of art they chose to represent their ideals during the Museum visit. Students may find that their image was not used as a symbol, but is a portrait of an actual person. Students can use this image to represent their ideals nonetheless, and to also illustrate a short essay or poem about the importance of the ideal to them. **Language Arts**

3) Students can start a school-wide contest for a symbol for their school or grade. Students can chose the format they would like to use, such as a single head as in the Mende *Helmet Mask*, or a compilation of images like the *Century Vase*. Also look at other institutional symbols such as ones for the school district, town, or universities as models. **Social Studies**

A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

II. People as Character Portrayals

Giovanni Maria Benzoni, *The Veiled Rebekah*, 1864 (figure 2)

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A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

II. People as Character Portrayals

SLIDE 3 Giovanni Maria Benzoni (Rome, 1809-1873)
The Veiled Rebekah, 1864
Marble, 64 x 23 x 19 1/2 inches
Gift of Mrs. John B. Gordon, 1927.23

THE WORK OF ART

In works of art, images of people sometimes stand in isolation to act as symbols. At other times we encounter people in the midst of action. In such works there is a sense of time and space. When first looking at *The Veiled Rebekah*, (figure 2, slide 3) it might seem that she is a symbol. Perhaps, she stands for ideal beauty similar to the Sande Society *Helmet Mask*. Yet, look closer. She is active. Her right hand is raised up to her chest and her left hand is stretched down by her side. She could be standing still, but maybe she is about to take a step. Another question to ask could be: Why is she wearing a veil? Many questions lead up to trying to understand what is going on, or in other words, what is the story. Because this figure is in some form of action, albeit quiet action, she could be seen as an actress or character within an unfolding narrative.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

An image of a person as a character may look familiar, like someone you know. You might wonder if this is a real person. For example, we can ask who was Rebekah? We do know that the sculptor was referring to the biblical heroine Rebekah. (We've included story of Rebekah and Isaac from the Old Testament at the end of the packet.) She was such a favorite subject of the artist that he repeated this figure in sculpture several times. A viewer in the nineteenth century would have recognized this as Rebekah because of her veil and would have known her story and that her character was pious, modest, and trusting.

INTERPRETATION

The veil not only made this sculpture recognizable, but it also gave Benzoni an opportunity to show off his artistic skill, because such a realistic-looking veil was very difficult to create with a hard material like marble. The veil also lends a sense of mystery and drama to the work of art. You sense something is about to happen, or maybe it has just happened.

A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

SLIDE 4

Church Picnic Story Quilt, 1988
Faith Ringgold (American, born 1930)
Tie-dyed, printed fabrics, acrylic on canvas, 74 1/2 x 75 1/2 inches,
Gift of Don and Jill Childress through the 20th Century Art
Acquisition Fund, 1988.28

THE WORK OF ART

The Veiled Rebekah has captured a particular character in a particular moment in a story. Compare this character to the numerous characters you see in the *Church Picnic Story Quilt* (figure 4) by Faith Ringgold. If you could hear as well as see these works of art, which do you think would be noisier? Looking across the quilt, we see that Faith Ringgold has chosen to show us several people and events, given us more information than Giovanni Benzoni has in the *Veiled Rebekah.* Still, you may have similar questions to ask: What happened before this scene? What will happen next? Who are these people and where are they? You can also ask if these are actual people or characters in a story.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

In this work of art, Faith Ringgold retells a story, she was told by her grandmother, of a family picnic in Atlanta's Piedmont Park in 1909. Ringgold has written the story, being told to Aleathia, Ringgold's mother, around the edges of the quilt. From the excerpt of the story included at the end of this packet, we learn not only about the events at the picnic, but about the subtle class distinctions in African-American society at that time and about the grandmother's own tales of trying to hold together a family after her husband has died.

INTERPRETATION

Whereas Rebekah is a character in the Bible, recognizable to many people, the people on the quilt are known only to Faith Ringgold's family. It is a private, daily-life scene that the artist shares with us, and, it is only one person's account of the day. Perhaps another family member remembers the events differently. Whether this story happened like we see it here is not as important as the fact that this tale was passed down through the family's generations. The quilt and the events portrayed represent the acts of sharing and sustaining family traditions.

A Look at Ourselves
Suggested Activities

II. People as Character Portrayals

PRE-VISIT

1) Discuss with the students the difference between a person as a symbol and a person as a character in a story. Little Red Riding Hood, for example, is a character in a fairy tale, but is she also a symbol for something? Create a mock debate where students divide in two groups and defend their positions on why Little Red Riding Hood could be considered a symbol or a character. **English, Language Arts**

2) Looking at the slide of *The Veiled Rebekah* and, not yet having read the story of Rebekah and Isaac included in this packet, have one group of students write about what they think led up to this moment. Have another group write about what they think will happen next. After the groups have written their pieces independently, compare their stories. Do their stories flow or do changes need to be made to create a consistent story?

3) Ask students bring in a family photograph that captures a dramatic moment or an action photo that tells a story. Is a picture worth a thousand words? Before the students present the photo to the class, have them verbally relate the story to their classmates. Then, when the other students see the photograph, discuss what more they learned about the story.

MUSEUM VISIT FOR TEACHER-GUIDED GROUPS

1) The students are detectives and they've come upon *Veiled Rebekah* at the scene of a crime. Have them compose ten questions they need to ask her to figure out what happened. Students pair up and trade their questions so that each student can role play as the detective and as Rebekah. **Language Arts**

2) If the *Church Picnic Story Quilt* is on view at the Museum, chose a particular portion of the scene to re-enact. (If the quilt is not on view this activity can also be done with "action paintings" such as *The Battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs* by Sebastiano Ricci in the European collection galleries or *Winter--High Bridge Park* by George Benjamin Luks in the American collection

galleries. Pose students as the people represented and have them begin a short scene starting from those poses. Have another "team" of students act out a different scene. Students not acting can be in charge of recording the dialogue; it will be needed back in the classroom as the basis of a short play. **Drama**

POST-VISIT

1) Students can create a story portrait of an important event in their lives in several different ways:

A. Create a storyboard, like a comic strip, with a scene in each frame.
B. Place their picture in the middle of a piece of paper or board and the scenes or items from an event around their picture. How is this kind of portrait similar or different than the *Century Vase*?
C. Create a large mural of an event, including several different actions within the scene, similar to the way Faith Ringgold does in her story quilt. Students can cut out figures from colored paper or fabric and glue them to a large piece of paper, employing the appliqué technique traditionally used for quilts, or they can paint on the figures as Ringgold does in her work. **Visual Arts, Language Arts**

2) Discuss how Giovanni Maria Benzoni succeeded at making the *Veiled Rebekah* realistic. What sorts of artistic skills does an artist "show off" when he or she makes a work of art realistic? Have students practice precision and observation of detail by making a realistic self-portrait from a photograph. Choose a photograph that is a close-up of the face and draw a grid onto the photo. On a piece of paper make a larger grid, making sure there are the same number of squares on the paper as on the photo. Look closely at the upper left hand square on the photograph and copy what you see on to the upper left hand square on the paper. Advanced students can calculate the proportion ratio between the photograph and the paper, so that they can accurately recreate the image on the larger piece of paper. **Visual Arts, Mathematics**

3) Refer the students to their dramatic re-enactments of the action painting in the Museum. Have them compile the scenes together to create a short play. Keep the same story line, but change the setting to today. How would the dialogue need to be different? **Drama**

A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

III. Real People

Henry Inman, *Yoholo-Micco*, 1832-33 (figure 3)

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A Look at Ourselves
Object Discussions

III. Real People

SLIDE 5 Henry Inman (American, 1801-1846)
Yoholo-Micco, 1832-33
Oil on canvas, 30 3/8 x 25 7/16 inches
Anonymous Gift, 1984.176

THE WORK OF ART

At a museum, when you look at the works of art, you meet many different kinds of people. As we've seen by examining works with people as symbols and people as character portrayals, real people are not always represented. How would you know if a real person is being portrayed? One way to find out is to look at the title of the work of art. For instance, the label next to the vase with George Washington's portrait reveals that it is titled *Century Vase*. It is not titled *Portrait of George Washington*, thus possibly indicating that the object's main function was a decorative vase rather than a carefully rendered portrait. Another example could be that Faith Ringgold decided to title her work *Church Picnic Story Quilt*, instead of choosing to list the individual names of the her relatives represented in the title.

When you approach the six portraits of Native Americans by Henry Inman, you notice they each have a name. We have chosen to focus on one, *Yoholo-Micco,* (figure 3, slide 5) for this discussion. What do you think is the purpose of this portrait? Does this person represent an ideal or commemorate an important historical moment? Is this person a character in a story? Has something just happened, or is it about to happen? Perhaps.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

Yet, if we assume an artist titles his or her work to emphasize an important aspect of it, we could infer that *Yoholo-Micco* could be a representation of a real person. We know that the artist Henry Inman was commissioned by Thomas L. McKenney, head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to document in paint, Native Americans leaders who visited Washington, D.C. Yoholo-Micco was a chief and diplomat who came from the Creek Confederacy, which consisted of towns across Alabama and Georgia. What more can we learn about this person

by looking closely at the way he is posed, his expression, and how he is dressed? When portraying a real person, an artist will often add details to the figure and the setting in which he or she is placed to give us clues about his or her personality.

INTERPRETATION

The way a person is represented can tell us whether he or she was important in their lifetime, as well as his or her relationship with the artist. How did Henry Inman choose to "address" this person in paint ? Is he "speaking" to Yoholo-Micco in a formal manner, or more casually as with a friend.

SLIDE 6

Ralph Earl (American, 1751-1801)
Portrait of David Baldwin, 1790
Oil on canvas, 56 3/4 x 61 7/8
Purchase in honor of Lawrence L. Gellerstedt, Jr., President of the Board of Directors, 1984-86, with funds from Alfred Austell Thornton in memory of Leila Austell Thornton and Albert Edward Thornton, Sr., and Sarah Miller Venable and William Hoyt Venable, 1985.221

THE WORK OF ART

You can compare this portrait to the painting of *David Baldwin* (cover image, slide 6) by Ralph Earl. Again, what are some clues the artist includes to tell us whether or not David Baldwin was a real person? We see that the artist chose to place the sitter in a setting in which he seems comfortable. He casually hangs one leg over the other. His hand placed on his hip gives him a sense of ease and confidence about who he is.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

Because he is seated at a desk, could we assume that David Baldwin was a professional man? What do the items on his desk tell us about his occupation? Compared to the portrait of Yoholo-Micco, *David Baldwin* has more items surrounding him that help us identify his personality. These items–books, papers, pen and ink–are known as **attributes.** Henry Inman, on the other

hand, minimized the visual area around Yoholo-Micco, but in compressing the space, the painter helps us focus our attention on the sitter's expression and details of his attire.

INTERPRETATION

In different ways, these two artists have introduced us to real people who, as we can see, were important during their lifetimes. Although they lived almost 200 years ago, we gain an understanding of who they were, and, similar to representations of people as symbols and as character portrayals, these images of real people give us insight not only into their personalities, but also their histories, beliefs, and the cultures in which they lived.

A Look at Ourselves
Suggested Activities

III. Real People

PRE-VISIT

1) Students can look up the definition of portrait in the dictionary and discuss whether the images of people they've seen as symbols and character portrayals fit within this definition. Discuss how an image of a real person may be different. **Social Studies**

2) Read a portrait of person in the form of an autobiography, journal or diary, such as ones by Helen Keller, Anne Frank, or Frederick Douglas. Before they visit the Museum, ask the students to keep a special journal in which they describe themselves to someone who might read their writings in the future. **Language Arts**

3) Compare and contrast the portraits of *Yoholo-Micco* and *David Baldwin*, and ask the students to identify the attributes that reveal the sitters' personalities. Ask the students to list, or actually bring into class, the attributes they would want included in a portrait of themselves. **Language Arts, Visual Arts**

MUSEUM VISIT FOR TEACHER-GUIDED GROUPS

1) Viewing the six portraits of Native Americans by Henry Inman at the Museum, ask the students to imagine or act out a conversation between the six men. What might they be saying to each other and what might they say to the painter? These men never actually met the painter because he copied their likenesses from lithographs. Thomas L. McKenney, United States superintendent of Indian trade, met these men and commissioned Inman to copy their portraits. What do the students think the Native Americans would say to McKenney? **Social Studies, Language Arts**

2) Compare the portraits by Ralph Earl and Henry Inman to a painting by American artist John Singer Sargent of his cousin, fellow artist *Ralph Curtis on the Beach at Scheveningen*. Discuss the similarities and differences in the artistic aspects of these portraits–use of line, color, light, composition, and the size of the paintings. Have the students decide in which style, casual or formal, they would like to have their portrait painted. **Visual Arts**

A Look at Ourselves
Suggested Activities

POST-VISIT

1) Ask the students write a letter to one of the portraits they "met" at the Museum to ask them any questions they may still have about the work of art. The students should write the letters in a style appropriate to the style of the painting, for example, correspondence with David Baldwin might be more business-like than a note to Ralph Curtis. **Language Arts**

2) Discuss and compare the ways people have themselves portrayed today. Besides painting or sculpture, what are some forms of showing others who your are? Artists, dancers. musicians, actors, are known for expressing themselves. Discuss whether other professions such as scientists, athletes, business people have ways of presenting to us who they are. How is this done in their dress (attire), posture, expressions, attributes, etc? **Social Studies**

3) Students may create covers for the journals they were keeping as a pre-visit activity. Encourage students to use various media, including photographs of themselves, found objects, fabric, etc., to create a collage to represent themselves. **Visual Arts**

A Look at Ourselves

Glossary

ATTIRE	clothing of a person, particularly splendid or elaborate dress
ATTRIBUTE	an object associated with or that serves to identify a person or thing
COIFFURE	a way of arranging hair; a hairstyle
COMMISSION	to hire an artist to create a work of art for you; a fee paid to an artist for that commissioned work
DEDUCE	to reach a conclusion by reasoning, to infer
ELDER	an older, influential member of a family, society, or community
GUARDIAN	someone who is responsible for the care of a person or thing
IDEAL	something regarded as a model of perfection or excellence
INFER	to lead to a conclusion, to deduce
INNOVATION	something newly introduced
MENDE	African ethnic group, primarily occupying areas of Sierra Leone in the Guinea Coast region
NARRATIVE	a story; the act of telling a story
SILHOUETTE	a drawing consisting of an outline of something, in particular a human figure
SITTER	the person who is the subject of a portrait
SYMBOL	something that represents something else by association or resemblance, especially a material object used to represent something invisible and intangible, such as an idea

A Look at Ourselves

Suggested Resources for Further Study

All of the materials listed below are available at Atlanta-Fulton County Public Libraries, for more information call (404) 730-4636.

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS K-8

Anno, Mitsumasa. *Anno's Journey.* New York: Philomel Books, 1977.

Conner, Patrick. *People at Home.* New York: Atheneum, 1982.

_____. *People at Work.* New York: Atheneum, 1982.

Cushman, Doug. *The ABC Mystery.* New York: Harper Collins, 1993.

Grigson, Geoffrey. *Shapes and People: A Book about Pictures.* New York: Vanguard Press, 1969.

Janson, H.W. *History of Art for Young People.* New York: Abrams, 1992.

Keightley, Moy. *Investigating Art: A Practical Guide for Young People.* London: Elek, 1976.

King, Marian. *A Gallery of Children: Portraits from the National Gallery of Art.* Washington: Acropolis Books, 1967.

McHugh, Christopher. *Faces.* New York: Thomson Learning, 1993.

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A Look at Ourselves
Narratives

The Story of Rebekah and Isaac

Old Testament (Genesis 24)

Abraham, who was a descendant of Noah, was getting older and beginning to worry that his son Isaac would never marry. He wanted his son to take as his wife a woman from his own homeland of Chaldea. So Abraham sent his trusted servant Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac.

In the city of Nahor, Eliezer prayed for guidance in his choice of a proper wife for Isaac. He saw the beautiful Rebekah drawing water from a well and Eliezer said to himself that if she offers him and his camel a drink, that it will be sign from God that she should be Isaac's wife. When she did offer him the water, he revealed himself and pursuaded her to return with him to Abraham's home.

As they approached Abraham's house, Rebekah saw Isaac working in the fields and she covered herself with a veil. When she is presented to Isaac, Rebekah draws the veil closely around her face and looks shyly down at the ground, but with her hand opened in a gesture of acceptance. She is ready and willing to become Isaac's wife.

A Look at Ourselves
Narratives

From the Church Picnic Story Quilt
by Faith Ringgold

Aleathia baby, Mama's home from the picnic. You sleep? I told that girl to rest today. Just stay put till me and Roscoe get back here. She workin too hard. Teachin chirrun they readin, writin and figurin by day the grown folks at night. "Aleathia" I told her, "You gonna make yourself sick." Up all night cookin for the ole folks Sunday breakfast. Made the banner for the church picnic. Embroidered the whole thing a little bit each night for she go to bed. Tote it over to the Reverend Stillwater house. Come home say her head troublin her. Well Miss Molly Mason back from her missionary work in Africa. May that what troublin her. That and Pa dyin.

Roscoe you go lay down 'fore supper. You ain sit all day. Tha boy don't play, don't talk. Just stand up by me at the picnic studyin the other chirrun playing with his hand tapping my shoulder every time he want another piece a chicken. He be alright. God don't give us no more than we can bear. He just grievin over his Pa. It over a year now but still fresh. I grievin too part time, t'other I just inchin along tryin to keep body and soul from cryin.

The Reverend and Miss Molly was sure 'nuff in love at the picnic. The way he took her in his arms, and she look up at him so tender. They in love child. The Reverend Ma and ole Reverend, his two boys and those ole sister of his all of 'em with they mouth gapped open like they see a ghost. And Reverend and Miss Molly just keepa studyin each other ain payin no'tention to nobody. Lord I tell you. What this world comin to?

Miss Molly know Ole Reverend Stillwater and whole familyain want the Reverend to marry her. Them folks would die if the Reverend married into that Mason family. The Stillwaters is a real fine family you know. High brow. All them men's finished Atlanta University; the mother and sisters finshed Spellmen chile. They hard workin, smart, good people, but they ain't too good for Miss Molly.

A Look at Ourselves
Activity Sheet

At the Museum

Find two works of art with people in them that you would like to meet. Make a quick sketch of each work in the boxes below, and don't forget to write down the title, artist, and date. Next, have a conversation or dialogue with each figure.

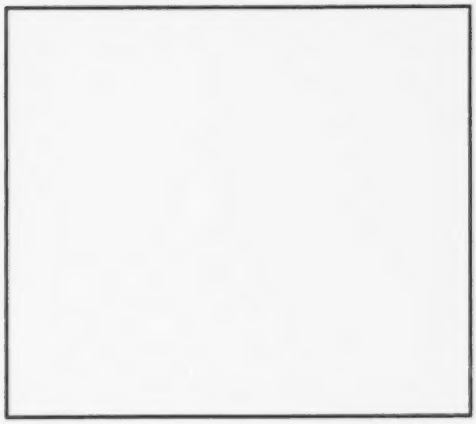
What do you want to know about this figure? Go ahead and ask it two questions! What questions would you ask and how do you think he or she or it would respond?

YOU:

OBJECT:

YOU:

OBJECT:



This figure has come to life and has been asked to star in a movie. You are the reporter, what will you ask it about the role it will play?

REPORTER:

MOVIE STAR:

REPORTER:

MOVIE STAR:

A Look at Ourselves
Activity Sheet

At School

At the Museum you've looked at people from different cultures and different time periods, and people who play different roles. Now its your turn to create a museum displaying different types of people. When you design this museum, what people would you like the visitors to meet–people who stand for something (symbols), people who play a role in a story (character portrayals), or people like you and me (real people)?

Here are some questions to help you design the works of art for your museum:

WHAT MATERIALS DO YOU WANT TO USE FOR YOUR WORK OF ART?

HOW BIG WILL IT BE?

WHAT WILL THE PERSON BE HOLDING OR WEARING?

WHERE WILL THE PERSON BE? WILL HE OR SHE BE SITTING OR STANDING?

IN YOUR MUSEUM, WHERE DO YOU WANT TO PLACE THIS WORK OF ART?

Now that you've designed your work of art of a person, find a partner and take turns posing the way your person does in your work of art. Trace your partner's outline on a big sheet of brown paper. Write the title of your work of art; it can be the person's name, or the ideal for which he or she stands (such as temperance or prudence) or the name of the story in which he or she is a character. Also write down a few important things you want people to know about your work of art. This is the information you will put on the label. Make sure to include your name as the artist and the date you made this work of art. Now you can display your "people outlines" in a museum in your classroom.

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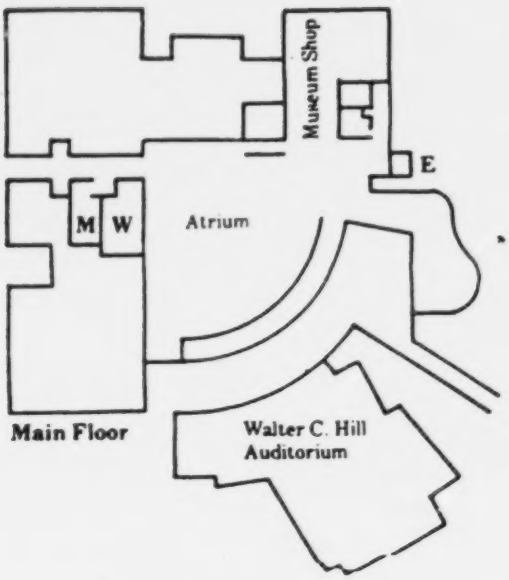
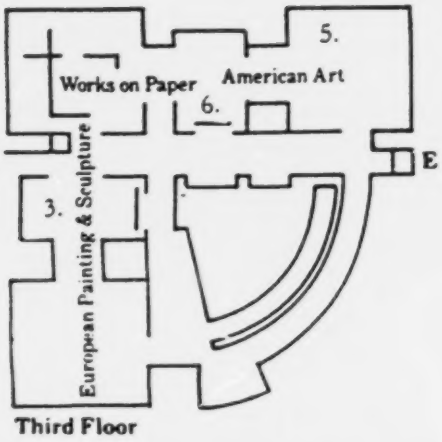
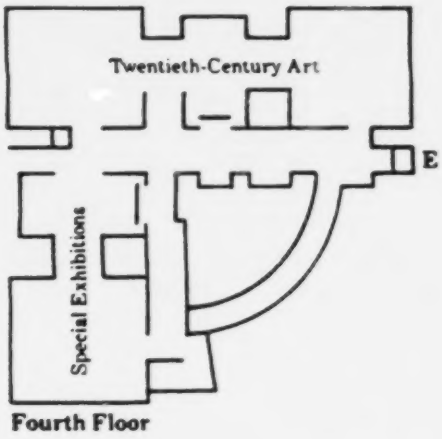
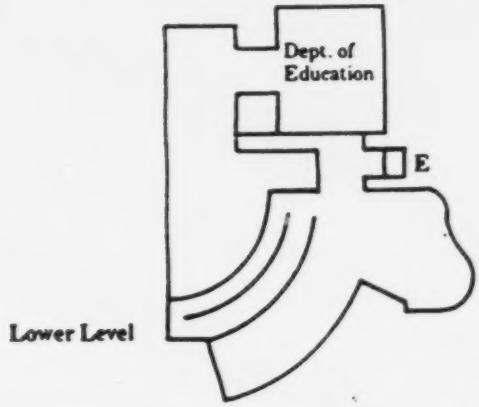
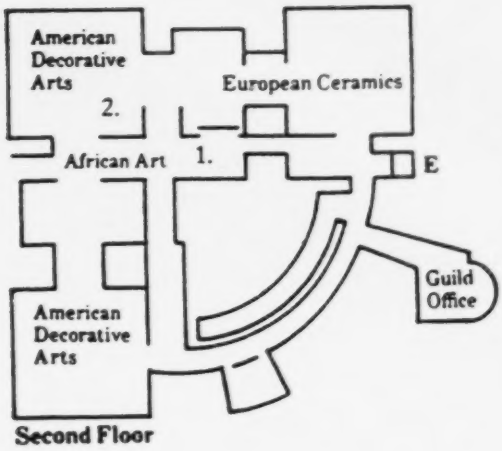
HIGH m u s e u m o f a r t











KEY

1. Helmet mask (Sowei) for the Sande Society **AFRICAN ART**
2. Century Vase, 1876 **AMERICAN DECORATIVE ARTS**
3. The Veiled Rebekah, 1864 **EUROPEAN PAINTING & SCULPTURE**
4. Church Picnic Story Quilt, 1988 **TEMPORARILY NOT ON DISPLAY**
5. Yoholo-Micco, 1832-22 **AMERICAN ART**
6. Portrait of David Baldwin, 1790 **AMERICAN ART**

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